DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 374 660 FL 022 374

AUTHOR El-Banna, Adel Ibrahim
TITLE The Effect of Formal Grammar Teaching on the Improvement of ESL Learners' Writing: An Experimental Study.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 40p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; Education Majors; *English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; *Grammar; Higher Education; Instructional Effectiveness; Second Language Instruction; *Sex Differences; *Writing (Composition); *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the effectiveness of teaching formal grammar and grammatical structures on development of writing skills of learners of English as a Second Language (ESL), and examined possible differences between males and females in this regard. Subjects were 97 university ESL students, 48 males and 49 females enrolled in a school of education; two groups were formed, approximately matched in gender composition and English language skills. The experimental group (24 males and 22 females) received intensive grammar instruction for 12 weeks, during an ESL composition course. The control group (24 males and 27 females) was given only the composition instruction. Grammar and composition post-tests were administered to all participants. Results indicate the experimental group males and females performed better on grammar than control group males, but there was no significant difference between experimental group members and control group females. Significantly better writing test performance was found for experimental group subjects overall, but not between experimental group females and control group males or between experimental group males and experimental group females. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 374 660

Tanta University
Faculty of Education
Kafr El-Sheikh
Department of Curriculum &
Methods of Teaching

The Effect of Formal Grammar Teaching on the Improvement of ESL Learners' Writing: An Experimental Study

By
Adel Ibrahim El-Banna, Ph.D.
EFL Teaching & Testing
Head Department of Curriculum &
Methods of Teaching
Tanta University
Faculty of Education,
Kafr El-Sheikh

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Adel-Ibrahim El-Banna
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

1994

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FL022374

The Effect of Formal Grammar Teaching on the Improvement of ESL Learner's Writing Skill: An Experimental Study

Adel Ibrahim El-Banna, Ph.D.
Tanta University, Faculty of Education at Kafr El-Sheikh

ABSTRACT

The present experimental study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of teaching formal grammar and grammatical structures on developing the writing skill of ESL learners and to study differences between males and females when taught grammar rules. On March, 4 of 1993, Tanta University Grammar Test and a Composition Test were administered to 97 subjects, 48 males and 49 females enrolled in the Faculty of Education at Kafr El-Sheikh. The experimental group was taught an intensive grammar course; teaching lasted for about twelve weeks. One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Chaffeé test were performed on the data. Research findings disclosed significant differences between the two groups on the grammar test in favour of the experimental group; significant differences were revealed between the experimental group (females) in grammar and the control group (males) in grammar in favour of the experimental group; and significant differences were also found between the experimental group (males) and the control group (males) in grammar in favour of the experimental group: However, no significant differences were indicated between the experimental groups (females) in grammar and between the control (females) and the experimental (males) in grammar. Significant differences were also indicated between the experimental group and the control group in composition writing in favour of the experimental group. However, no significant differences were revealed between the experimental group (females) and the control group (males) in composition writing; and no significant differences were indicated between the experimental group (males) and the experimental group (females) in composition writing.

On the basis of the findings and view points of researchers it seems that there would be no consensus of opinion on the utility of formal grammar teaching and its effect on improving EFL/ESL learners writing skill.

Therefore, one has to be very cautious when making any generalization of the findings of this research work (12 Tables are included).

INTRODUCTION

As is true in many areas of language teaching today, the teaching of grammar is full of controversy. Grammar pervades all language skills and the objective of teaching it is the correct use of the target language for communicative purposes. Jespersen (1972) stated that the chief objective of teaching grammar today, especially that of a foreign language, is to give rules which must be obeyed if one wants to speak and write the language correctly.

To many teachers, learning a foreign language is basically a question of grammar. One hears the complaint that students were never any good at learning languages because they could not remember the grammar of the language (Gurrey, 1973, p. 70). Therefore, grammar teaching is so popular in many schools and colleges and with many teachers for many reasons. One reason is that it is possible for a teacher to teach the grammar of a language although he or she has no real command over that language. The second reason is that grammar is popular with examiners. It is difficult to test good speaking ability or writing ability. Grammar questions are easy to set and correct. Moreover, many examiners are elderly; they learned their English under a grammatical system. The third reason is that directors and inspectors of education demand grammar. They observed that the students in the schools speak and write ungrammatically and say, "Therefore, teach them more grammar." The fourth reason is that some experts in education demand it "grammar gives a training in reasoning" (West, 1979, pp. 34-35).

Unlike teachers of the native language, the teachers of a foreign language do not doubt upon the pressing need for teaching the grammar of a new language. They, however, have considerable doubts about how this grammar should be taught (Gurrey, 1973, p. 70).

Grammatical lists, together with grammar rule given in the target language or in the mother tongue are intended as aids in learning the forms of the foreign language. Explanations in the mother tongue or in the foreign language and translations deal with

the meaning are presented to the students in order to help them learn the language. Such grammar translation approaches are widely used in many Egyptian schools and colleges. Rivers (1981, p. 93), maintained that some variations stemmed from the attitudes of the teachers toward grammar. Some teachers said, "It is tremendously important that the students know their grammar," while other teachers maintained, that "students can speak and write their native language with ease" "without knowing any grammar," and that a knowledge of grammar should therefore not be required of the person learning another language. Yet others maintained that students cannot use their native language properly in speech and writing because they were never "taught grammar." So, the contraversy goes on and the same thing applies to the teaching of grammar.

At this point, it should seem necessary to present the different methods or approaches by which EFL/ESL learners might be taught with particular emphasis on the teaching of grammar. To the methodology theorists of EFL and ESL the importance of grammar has waxed and waned. Therefore, it would seem essential for a perfect understanding of this problem, to survey in brief these differing methodologies, and how and why they gained acceptance, and in some cases, opposition.

a. The Grammar-Translation Method:

With this method of teaching the language, as the name implies, grammar is of essential importance. It provides the rules for putting words together and it is taught in a very formal way.

b. The Direct Method:

The reaction to the formal nature of "The Grammar Translation Method," the direct method came with its focus on speaking and listening. According to the tenets of this method, grammar is not taught, rather as the basic grammatical structures.

c. The Reading Method:

Here, where reading is the basic criterion for learning a language, as much grammar as is necessary to understand the written word is taught.

d. The Audio-Lingual Method:

This method, which became famous in the 1960's was based to a large extent on the behaviourist theories of psychologists. It also took much from the direct method while reacting against the reading method. This method is based upon the notion that language learning is a process of habit formation and that the repetitive drills are the key to the mastery of language skills. Grammar is not taught as a separate entity but as something that will be learned through the use of repetitive drills.

e. The Cognitive Method:

This methodology came as a reaction to the audiolingual method. For the advocates of the congitive method maintain that language is not a matter of habit but of thought, basing their notions on Chomsky's theories. He stated that language learning is a creative process, "a rationalistic, congitive activity rather than a response to outside stimuli" (Newton, 1979, p. 19).

Advocates of this method tend to think that grammar should be taught deductively, that is, learners are given a grammatical rule with so many examples before they practise the use of a certain structure. This is opposed to the inductive approach suggested by the audio-linguists where learners see a rule in operation, practise its use and then deduce the rule for themselves.

Thus, the cognitive method requires of learners "an abstract comprehension of the workings of the grammatical system", thinking that, "this basic knowledge is indispensable for effective language use" (Rivers and Temperley, 1978, p. 277).

Consequently, it is obvious that most language teachers down the ages are always worried about the fact that grammar rules were not systematically presented, explained and learned in an inductive approach. They proposed a return to explaining grammar rules first, thus involving learners' reasoning processes in language learning (Rivers, 1981, p. 78). Transformation-generative grammarians arrive at their linguistic rules by a process of induction, as does Chomsky's hypothesis first language learning.

To clarify, formalists have relied mostly on a deductive form of teaching, moving from the statement of the rule to its application in the example (Rivers, 1981, pp. 25-26; Rivers and Temperley, 1978, p. 275), whereas activists have avocated the comprehension by students themselves of the way the language is working. They prefer students to develop a rule or generalization themselves after they had heard or seen certain forms and used them in a number of ways; this is a process of inductive learning moving from examples to rules (Rivers, 1981; Rivers and Temperley, 1978).

Diller (1970, pp. 16-18) advocated an inductive approach. He points out that knowning a rule and being able to act on it is quite independent of being able to formulate the rule adequately. The rule can be psychologically real without any formulation of it. Rules for action are best learned in conjuction with demonstration and practice of action.

Rivers and Temperley (1978) also recommended that grammar is well learned inductively and through action rather than through deductive grammar rules. Abbott and Wingard (1981, pp. 282-283) maintained that "the practical rules we do use must be based on an appreciation of up-to-day usage, not simply an ancient traditions." They added that "Plenty of practice is needed for mastery of the grammatical patterns by which notions and functions are realized."

On the contrary, most teachers of English imagine that intellectual explanations are more effective in teaching than practice and application, as if learning a language were purely an intellectual affair (Gurrey, 1973, p. 76). It is quite obvious that those teachers stick to the traditional approach of teaching grammar. This may be due to some reasons. These can be summarized as follows: (a) They have been taught by this method; (b) It is the oldest and most prevalent method in language teaching; (c) It does not require too much work on the part of the teacher. The teacher has to write down the rule and the learners have to memorize it.

Currey (1973, p. 72) recommended deductive exercises for learning the main rules of the target language. Nevertheless, he also recommends that the greater part of learning should not be listening to explanations by the teacher, but applying what has been learned by rote or analogy or observation. He added that "Grammar can be made very simple or a usage may become evident through a large number of easy exercises when the brighter students can deduce the rule, but for the majority this often fails."

Garroll (1971, p. 112) saw a place for habit formation as well as rule learning in language teaching. As for an inductive versus a deductive presentation, Carroll pointed out that neither alone is adequate; for effective teaching there must be considerable alternation between rules and examples. It hardly matters whether one starts with the rule or the example as long as this alternation exists. It is quite obvious that Carroll calls for using both approaches in teaching grammar.

Chastain (1971) also maintained a deductive approach, she put it clearly by stating (p. 48) that "one basic tenet of the cognitive approach that students never expected to meet new structures prior to the explanations of those forms." In discussing "congitive materials, Chastain indicated (p. 48) that "a cognitive book would not proceed in an inductive fashion....A cognitive book would proceed from focus on structural forms and functions to exercises, to reading."

Finally, this author would like to cite Lado (1981, p. 238) who had some final say in this matter. Lado stated that "the ambivalence of the profession toward the formal study of grammar will remain with us during the 1980's, that is, there will continue to be disagreement between those who, regardless of theoretical discussions, believe that the study and teaching of a second language is fundamentally the study of grammar, on the one hand, and those who abhor the formal study and teaching of grammar in any form, on the other hand. Lado, however, concluded saying that "some sort of formalization or confirmation of rules seems hard to ignore or dismiss."

To add, since the pendulum of teaching methodologies swings from grammar-translation through audio-lingual to cognitive code learning and back to grammar translation, it is no wonder that teachers are confused. From the previous discussion, it is clear that there is no consensus of opinion on the significance of formale grammar teaching. Therefore, the question which interests this author is : Does the teaching of grammar to EFL/ESL learners improve skill in writing?

Purpose of study:

The basic objective of this research work is to study the extent to which the teaching of formal grammar and grammar terminology would improve the writing skill of first year ESL learners. Comparison was made between two groups of ESL learners enrolled in the first year, Department of English. Skill in writing was defined as scores obtained by ESL learners on a grammar test and on a composition test.

Need for the study:

Language proficiency, especially in writing is a universal problem. The results that would be attained from this research work may assist practitioners to improve their teaching practices and educational planners to interfere in the curriculum development of the area.

The need for the study was promoted by a dearth of research work pertinent to the effect of formal teaching of grammar on ESL learners' skill in writing. Additionally weakness in composition is an old complaint in our schools and colleges. Year after year examiners read very poor compositions in final exams that are full of serious mistakes in grammar, structure, and idioms. The marks scored on the essay tests are usually very low. Something has to be done to remedy this deplorable state of affairs, since failure to express oneself correctly and with ease in a language taught for at least six or seven years is a clear - cut evidence of faulty teaching. Also, differences in linguists' and language experts' opinions concerning the utility of formal grammar teaching and its effect on developing non-native speaker's skill in writing still prevail. To this

researcher's knowledge, no research pertinent to the teaching of formal grammar and its effect on the writing skill of EFL/ESL learners has been done in Egypt.

Hypotheses:

It has hypothesized that there would be differences in the grammar knowledge and the writing quality of compositions written by two groups: one experimental group taught by grammar rules and another studying no grammar. Ten null hypotheses were tested since there was no empirical evidence to anticipate a superiority of one group over the other. The hypotheses were tested for overall results on a grammar test as well as on a composition writing test.

Methodology:

The present research is an experimental one. The independent variable - language teaching methodology - was not manipulated by the author. The dependent variable was grammar measured by a grammar test, and skill in writing measured by a composition writing test.

Instruments:

To obtain the necessary data for examining the validity of the hypotheses, the following tests were employed:

a. Tanta University Grammar Test:

It is developed by this author. It covers the most significant features in the grammar of the language. The grammar test consists of a 100 items, 76 are true/false items whereas the remaining 24 items are of the completion type. The test is content valid since it is based on an intensive course in English grammar and this author exercised great care in its development. To add, the total test validity was estimated through a panel of experts. The total test reliability was calculated by using Kuder-Richardson 21. It was 0.74.

b. Compsition Test:

It is selected by this author from **Hill's Composition Book** "Outline Composition Book." The subjects were asked to write a composition on the theme of "Description of a Wedding Party." The subjects were provided with the necessary directions. The subjects' composition samples were evaluated by two experienced raters (Azzer, H., 1993; El-Gohary, S., 1993) each holds a Ph.D. degree either in linguistics or literature. The composition samples were corrected on the basis of five categories. These were: (1) content; (2) organization; (3) vocabulary; (4) language use; and, (5) mechanics. The two raters independently scored all the essays with scores and criteria based on an ESL composition profile (Newburry Publishing House, 1981).

The total test reliability was calculated by employing correlation coefficients of the two raters (Hinkle, D.; Wiersna, W. and Jurs, S., 1979, P. 75). It was found to be 0.77. In addition the reliability of the subtests were also achieved through Kuder - Richardson 21. It was 0.71 for content, 0.55 for organization, 0.50 for vocabulary, 0.65 for language use, and 0.73 for mechanics.

The sub-tests' validity was calculated through using correlation coefficients between each subtest and the total scores. They were 0.51 for content, 0.63 for organization, 0.47 for vocabulary, 0.61 for language use, and 0.68 for mechanics.

Subjects:

The total sample that participated in the present study was 97 ESL learners males and females enrolled in the first year, Department of English at the Faculty of Education at Kafr El-Sheikh. The subjects were divided, into two groups. The first group (the experimental group) embraced 46 subjects 24 males and 22 females. The second group (the control group) consisted of 51 subjects 24 males and 27 females. The experiment started on November 18, 1992 and was interrupted for sometime because of first term exams. The experimental group started again to study grammar rules and grammatical

terminology in their Essay Lectures on February 3, 1993. On March 4, 1993 the subjects were administered the two tests:

1. Tanta University Grammar Test.
2. A Composition Writing Test.

The experimental group was taught during their "Essay Course" an intensive grammar course which included the most significant grammar topics: The parts of speech, clauses and phrases, verbs, nouns and pronouns, subject-verb relationship, tenses, mood and voice, modifiers-adjectives, adverbial phrases and clauses and connectives.

The control group was not taught any grammar or grammatical terminology but they were given composition writing tasks and were asked just to write compositions without any explanations of any formal grammar.

It would seem important to point out that the two groups were matched on the basis of their English language scores in the Thanaweyya Amma, see Table 1, P..17.

Test Administration and Scoring:

After the termination of the experiment all the participant subjects in the study, i.e., the experimental and control groups were administered two tests on March 4-5, 1993 by this author and two well-trained research assistants. The tests were administered in two separate sessions, a 100 minute session for the grammar test and a 60 minute session for the composition writing test. The subjects recorded their answers to the grammar test on the test booklet which were then scored manually by this author. On March 5, 1993, the Composition Test was given to the subjects. Instructions for this activity were common to all subjects and consisted of a brief introduction of the topic followed by 60 minutes for the completion of the writing task. The subjects' composition samples were scored by two raters who either hold a Ph.D. in linguistics or a Ph.D. in literature. The scoring of the samples was based on scores and criteria provided by an

ESL Composition Profile (Newburry Publishing House, 1981). Some statistical procedures were used to compare the mean scores of the groups. These were: ANOVA and Chaffeé.

Results

The investigation reported here studied and drew comparisons between grammar and composition writing of two groups of ESL learners. In addition, comparisons, on the basis of sex, were made between the two groups. To clarify, before administering the two tests, this author matched the two groups on the basis of scores obtained in English in the Thanaweyya Amma Final Exam as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Group Size Number, Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Experimental and Control Groups on the Thanaweyya Amma Final Exam.

Groups	N	X	D
Experimental	46	36.48	2.36
Control	51	36.45	2.40

Employing the t. Test (El-Sayed, F.; 1979, p. 467) revealed no significant differences between the control and experimental groups. In other words, they are matched.

The Group Size, Means and Standard Deviations of the Two Groups on the Grammar and Composition Writing Tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Group size, Means and Standard Deviations of Experimental and Control Groups on the Grammar and Composition Writing Tests.

Data Groups	N	Grammar Test		Composition Test	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
Experimental	46	60.04	8.66	55.54	8.67
Experimental (Males)	24	59.54	8.66	56.46	8.32
Experimental (Females)	22	60.59	8.63	54.55	8.94
Control	51	49.96	8.15	49.82	11.46
Control (Males)	24	48.71	7.90	52.16	12.34
Control (Females)	27	51.07	8.22	47.74	10.17

To test the differences, if any existed, between the groups, One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) (Hinkle, D.; Wiersma, W. *et al.*, 1979, p. 242), and the Chaffeé equation were utilized. In this study, the 0.01 level of significance will be used to support or reject hypotheses.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group on the Grammar Test.

Using ANOVA showed that significant differences did exist between the two groups in grammar at the 0.01 level as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA, General Grammar Level of the Two Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c(1)	F_t(2)
Between Groups	2458.7	1	2458.7	34.13*	6.96
Within Groups	6843.7	95	72.04		

* Significant at the 0.01 level.

Chaffeé (Farag, S. 1985, p. 409) revealed significant differences between the experimental group and the control group at the 0.01 level in favour of the experimental group (F.(3) = 47.7). Accordingly the first null hypothesis was rejected.
1. F_c = F. Calculated. 2. F_t = F. Tabulated. 3. F = Chaffeé

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group (Females) and that of the control group (Females) on the Grammar Test.

ANOVA showed that significant differences did exist between the two groups (Females) on the Grammar Test at the 0.01 level as indicated in table 4.

Table 4: ANOVA, General Grammar Level of the Two Groups (Females).

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	1097.93	1	1097.93	14.9*	7.19
Within Groups	3463.17	47	73.7		

* Significant at the 0.01 level.

Chaffeé revealed significant differences between the two groups, (females) at the 0.01 level in favour of the experimental group, females. (F = 14.89) Accordingly, hypothesis two was rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group (Males) and that of the control group (Males) on the Grammar Test.

Using ANOVA revealed significant differences between Males in both the control and the experimental groups at the 0.01 level on the Grammar Test as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA, General Grammar Level of Males in Both the Control and the Experimental Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	1408.33	1	1408.33	20.2*	7.19
Within Groups	3206.92	46	69.72		

* Significant at the 0.01 level.

Chaffeé showed significant differences between the two groups (Males) at the 0.01 level in favour of Males of the Experimental Group (F = 20.2). Accordingly, hypothesis three was rejected.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of the Males and that of the Females (control group) on the Grammar Test.

The results of using ANOVA in Table 6 showed no significant differences between the Males and the Females of the control group at the 0.01 level.

Table 6: ANOVA, General Grammar Level of Males and Females in the Control Group.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	71.07	1	71.07	1.08	7.19
Within Groups	3230.8	49	65.9		

Accordingly, hypothesis four was supported.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of the Males and that of Females in the experimental group on the Grammar Test.

As Table 7 indicated, ANOVA showed no significant differences between Males and Females in the experimental group on the Grammar Test at the 0.01 level.

Table 7: General Grammar Level of males and Females in the Experimental Group.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	12.64	1	12.64	0.16	7.27
Within Groups	3439.3	44	78.16		

Accordingly, hypothesis five was supported.

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group on the Composition Writing Test.

Using ANOVA revealed significant differences between the experimental and the control group on the Composition Writing Test at the 0.01 level as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: ANOVA, General Composition Writing Level of the Two Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	791.34	1	791.34	7.42*	6.9
Within Groups	10159.3	95	10.94		

* Significant at the 0.01 level.

Chaffeé showed significant differences between the two groups at the 0.01 level in favour of the experimental group (F = 7.42). Accordingly, hypothesis six was rejected.

Hypothesis Seven: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of Females in the two groups on the Composition Writing Test.

ANOVA indicated significant differences between Females in the two groups at the 0.01 level as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: ANOVA, General Composition Writing Level of the Females in Both the Experimental and Control Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	561.32	1	561.32	5.8	7.19
Within Groups	4551.14	47	96.83		

Accordingly, hypothesis seven was supported.

Hypothesis Eight: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of Males in the two groups on the Compositon Writing Test.

ANOVA revealed no significant differences between males in the control group as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: ANOVA, General Composition writing Level of the Males in Both the Experimental and Control Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	221.04	1	221.04	1.9	7.19
Within Groups	5317.29	46	115.59		

Accordingly, hypothesis eight was supported.

Hypothesis Nine: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of Males and that of Females in the control group on the Composition Writing Test.

Using ANOVA indicated no significant differences between males and females at the 0.01 level on the Composition Writing Test as was made clear in Table 11.

Accordingly, hypothesis nine was supported.

Table 11: ANOVA, General Composition Writing Level of Both Males and Females in The Two Groups.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	248.89	1	248.89	1.89	7.19
Within Groups	6449.02	49	131.612		

Accordingly, hypothesis nine was supported.

Hypothesis Ten: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of Males and Females in the experimental group on the Composition Writing Test.

ANOVA revealed no significant differences between males and females in the experimental group on the Composition Writing Test at the 0.01 level as was made clear in Table 12.

Table 12: General Composition Writing Level of Both Males and Females in The Experimental Group.

Source	SS	d.f	MS	F_c	F_t
Between Groups	42	1	42	0.43	7.19
Within Groups	4319.4	44	98.17		

Accordingly, hypothesis nine was supported.

DISCUSSION

The findings obtained will be discussed in two parts. The first part deals with the results of formal grammar teaching to ESL learners, and the second part is mainly devoted to the results of differences in ESL learners performance on the composition test. The performance of both males and females will be also commented on.

1. Results pertinent to formal gramma teaching:

a. ANOVA and Chaffeé indicated significant differences between the control and the experimental groups in favour of the experimental (See table 3). The experimental group showed superiority over the control group since the experimental group was receiving intensive instruction in grammar rules, explanations and grammar exercises whereas the control group had never been exposed to this same experience. The experimental group learned, read and listened to explanations of rules and their errors in grammar were corrected. In this concern, Krashen (1981, p. 99) pointed out that "We learn by consciously attending to form, by reading about or listening to explanations of rules." The experimental group may have learned best the grammar of the language through their active participation in forming the grammatical rules. To add, the

experimental group's superiority over the control group may also be due to ESL learners enthusiasm and eagerness to learn the rules of the language since they have started their study in a specialized section, that is, the English Department which necessitates learning the rules of the language. These ESL learners could be described as being anxious to learn and comprehend the more complex aspects of the grammar system. In closing, ESL learners participants in the experimental group outperformed the other ESL participants in the control group [significant differences were obtained in favour of experimental group whether they were males or females (See Tables 4 and 5)].

b. With regard to the performance of females and males on the grammar test, the findings indicated that there were no significant differences between the two sexes (See Tables 6, 7 and 8). This may be due to the fact that in the control group, the subjects (males and females) received no instruction in the grammar of the language whereas the experimental group (males and females) was taught an intensive grammar course.

2. Results pertinent to composition writing:

a. ANOVA and Chaffeé (See Table 9) showed significant differences in composition writing in favour of the experimental group. The results obtained were consistent with some language specialists and researchers' view points such as Bechara, E. (1989); Cunha, C. (1964) and Sacconi, L. (1979) who see that the teaching of grammar rules is required for the production of a good composition. To add, some teachers maintain that "It is tremendously important that students know the grammar of the language because it greatly helps improve the speaking and writing skills (Rivers, W. 1981, p. 93). To add, West, M. (1979, p. 37) and Chapman, L. (1979, p. 38) maintain that the teaching of formal grammar is significant because it prevents and corrects errors in the language, and l elps those who whould like to speak and write the language correctly.

On the contrary, some other language experts and researchers' are against teaching formal grammar such as Faisl, A. (1993); Back, E. (1987); Luft, C. (1985); Abrahamson, R. (1978); Garcia, O. (1977); and Holliday, M. (1974). They see that improvement of skill

in writing does not tend to be better because language is taught by using grammar explanations and grammar exercises. To conclude, subjects of the experimental group have been exposed to an intensive course in formal grammar, and outperformed those in the control because they managed to improve their skill in writing. This may be attributed to the many exercises and explanations they have received.

However, the results showed that there were no differences in the performance of both males and females in both experimental and control groups on the translation test part I and II (See Tables 10, 11). These results are consistent with some researchers' view points such as Back, E. (1987); Luft, C. (1985); Abrahamson, R. (1978); and Garcia, O. (1977).

Therefore, since some varieties stemmed from the attitude of language specialists and results of this research toward grammar teaching, it is recommended that this area be subjected to further research.

b. With reference to the performance of females and males on the composition test, the results showed no differences in the performance of the two sexes in the experimental and the control group (See Table 12, 13 and 14 in this volume). This may be due to the fact that in the control group, males and females received no instruction in the grammar of the language which helps them improve skill in writing good composition. At the same time, the experimental group, males and females underwent many experiences and learned many grammatical rules which helped them to improve their performance at the same level with the control. These findings, however, were not consistent with research work in the same area.

It was expected that females would do better than males on both the grammar and the composition tests. In this respect Snow, R. (1988) stated that females do better than males in language learning tasks. In this concern, Fahmy, M. (1975, p. 302), pointed out that females are faster than males with regard to language development, verbal ability and comprehension. To add, Maccoby, E. and Jacklin, C. (1974) concluded that females,

by adolescence, excel at tasks requiring verbal power, including both receptive and productive language.

CONCLUSION:

The feasibility of generalizing conclusions obtained from experimental researches of behaviour of this nature are restricted by two factors, i.e. the size of the sample and the way the sample selected. On the basis of these two factors, one has to be very careful when making any generalization of the results of the present study. Regardless of the results obtained concerning the significance of formal grammar instruction and its effect on improving ESL learners compositions, one has to be also careful when making generalizations based on the findings of this study.

Acknowledgement:

The author wishes to thank Dr. Richard Abrahamson, Marcia De Moraes, Lilia Bastos and Ligia Elliot whose research works were very helpful to him when carrying out this study. The author is extremely thankful to Dr. David Caulfield and Dr. Lisle A. Palmer Professor of Language Teaching and Testing at Maryland College, Washington DC, the USA for reading and commenting on an earlier version of this research work.

REFERENCES

Abbott, G. and Wingard P. The Teaching of English as an International Language. London: Collins, 1981.

Abd El-Salam, N. An Experimental Study for Factors Involved in the Language Ability Using Factorial Analysis. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Ain Shams University, College for Women, 1974. (In Arabic).

Abrahamson, R. The Effects of Formal Grammar Instruction vs. The Effects of Sentence-Combining Instruction on Student Writing: A Collection of Evaluative Abstracts of Petrtinent Research Document (Eric: ED NO. 145-450).

Back, Eurico. Failure of the Teaching of Portuguese. Proposal for a Solution. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1987.

Bechard, Evanildo. Lessons of Portuguese by Syntax Analysis. Rio De Janeiro: Grifo, 1976.

Bechard, Evanildo. Modern Portuguese Grammar. Sáo Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1987.

Bechara, Evanildo. The Teaching of Grammar? Oppression? Freedom? Rio de Janeiro: Ätica, 1989.

Carroll, J. Current Issues in Psycholinguistics and Second Language Teaching. TESOL Quarterly, 5, 1971.

Celce-Mrcia, M. and L. McIntosh. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Rowley, Mass.: Newburry House, 1979.

Chapman, L. Teaching English to Beginners. In Raja T. Nasr, Teaching and Learning English: Selected and Simplified Readings. London: Longman, 1979.

Chastain, K. The development of Modern Language Skills: Theory to Practice. Philadelphia: The Centre for Curriculum Development , 1971.

Chomsky, Noam. Rules and Representations: On Human Inteligens and Its Product. Rio de Janeiro: Zaher, 1981.

Cunha, Celso. A Politic of Language. Rio de Janeiro: Sao Jose, 1964.

Diller, K. Linguistic Theories of Language Acquisition. In Hester, ed., 1970; and Diller, K. Generative Grammar, Structural Linguistics and Language Teaching. Rowley, Mass.: Ne Burry House, 1971.

El-Ghareib, R. Evaluation and Educational Measurement. Cairo: The Anglo-Egyptian Book Shop, 1985 (In Arabic).

El-Sayed, F. Statistical Psychology and the Measurement of Human Mind. Cairo: Dar El-Fikr El-Arabi, 1979. (In Arabic).

Elia, Silvio. Orientations of Modern Linguistics. Rio de Janeiro: Ao Livro Tecnico, 1978.

Faisal, A. Can Grammar be Taught Creatively. In Creativity Bulletin, Special Issue No. 14, Spring, 1993.

Fahmy, M. Psychology: It Foundations and Educational Applications. Cairo: El_khangy Bookshop, 1975. (In Arabic).

Farrag, S. Statistics in psychology. Cairo: Dar El-Nahda Al-Arabia, 1985. (In Arabic).

Garcia, Othon M. Communication in Modern Prose. Rio de Janeiro: Fundacao Getulio Vargas, 1977.

Gurrey, P. Teaching English as a Foreign Language. New Impression, London: Longman, 1973.

---------- The Teaching of Grammar. In Raja T. Nasr. Teaching and Learning English. London: Longman, 1979.

Hill, L. Outline Composition Book. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Hinkle, D.; Wiersma, W. and Jurs, S.G. Applied Statistics for the Behavioural Sciences. Chicago: Rand McNally Publishing Co., 1979.

Jespersen, O. The Philosophy of Grammar. London: Allen and Unwin, 1972.

Krashen, S. Effective Second Language Acquisition: Insights from Research. In Alatis, J. The Second Language Classroom: Directions for the 1980's. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Luft, Celso P. Language and Freedom. For a New Conception of the Mother Language. Porto Alegre: L & PM, 1985.

Maccoby, E. and Jacklin, C. The Psychology of Sex Differences. Standford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Moraes, M.; Bastos, L.; and Elliot, L. Relationship Between Language Teaching Methods and Writing Quality. Paper presented at the Aera Annual Meeting, Chicago: Illinois, April, 1991.

Newton, A. Current Trend in Language Teaching. In Celce-Murcia and McIntosh (eds.). Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Rowley, Mass.: Newburry House Publishers, Inc., 1979.

Rivers, W. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. Chicago: The university of Chicago press, 1981.

Rivers, W. and Temperley, M. A Practical Guide to the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreigh Language. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Sacconi, Luiz A. Our Grammar. Sao Paulo: Moderna, 1979.

Snow, R. Professor of Education and Psychology. California: Stanford University, 1988.

West, M. How much English Grammar. In Nasr, R. Teaching and Learning English. London: Longman, 1979.

Appendix A

1. Tanta University Grammar Test Form

Tanta University
Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum
and Methods of Teaching
Kafr El-Sheikh

Tanta University Grammar Test For ESL Learners

By
Adel Ibrahim El-Banna, Ph.D.
EFL Teaching & Testing
Head Department of Curriculum &
Methods of Teaching
Faculty of Education
Kafr El-Sheikh

1993

Tanta University Grammar Test
For ESL Learners

By

Adel Ibrahim El-Banna, Ph.D.

General Directions:

1. Turn this page when the examiner tells you to do so. This test consists of 100 items and requires approximately 100 minutes of working time.
2. Read the directions which are printed at the beginning of the test carefully, and proceed at once to answer the questions. Do not spend too much time on Any one item. There is a time limit for each item.
3. No questions may be asked after the examination has begun.
4. Do not talk to any one during the test.
5. You must mark all you answers on the test booklet you have been given by putting a circle around the same letter (T or F) as the answer you have chosen.
6. Mark only one answer for each question.
7. If you make a mistake or wish to change an answer, be sure to cross out your first circle and then put another circle around the letter of the answer you prefer.

Do not turn this page until you are kindly told to do so.

When you are told to turn the page, read the directions and then go on to the questions.

Good luck

Name: Group: Date:

The following sentences may (or may not) contain grammatical errors. If the sentence is grammatically correct circle "T" and go the next item; if it is not grammatically correct, circle "F".

1	The lamp hit the table when it was knocked over.	T	F
2	Nady wanted to see the tigers, camels and lions, who were at the zoo.	T	F
3	When he won the prize, Ahmed shouted with joy. In this sentence, "When he won the prize" is a subordinate clause whereas" Ahmed shouted with joy" is a main clause.	T	F
4	We got the day off. This is a subordinate clause.	T	F
5	When the fire was put out. This is a main clause.	T	F
6	Walking ten miles a day is very hard work. This is a propositional phrase.	T	F
7	There are several people going to work. This is an infinitive phrase.	T	F
8	Salem met Shady, who was in town for a few days, and they went to a theatre. This is a compound sentence.	T	F
9	El-Bannas put their house up for sale on Friday and it was sold by Monday. This is a complex sentence.	T	F
10	How long must we suffer? This is an interrogative sentence.	T	F
11	Inflation is a serious problem. This is a declarative sentence.	T	F
12	Whoever goes to bed last should shut off the lights. "Whoever goes to bed last" is the subject of this sentence.	T	F

13	Turn off that radio! This sentence expresses an indicative mood.	T	F
14	May I have a new book? This sentence expresses a subjunctive mood.	T	F
15	Two firemen were injured in the fire. This sentence expresses an indicative mood.	T	F
16	The five types of nouns are proper, plural, singular, feminine and masculine.	T	F
17	Gender indicates the sex of the person or thing named whether singular or plural, or predicate.	T	F
18	Here is a letter for you.	T	F
19	The audience were upset by the delay.	T	F
20	The dishes are not clean, so don't use the dishes.	T	F
21	The visiting team felt they deserved to win.	T	F
22	The home team won its final game of the season.	T	F
23	Neither Aly nor Shady could find their books.	T	F
24	The old man who's typewriter I borrowed, gave it to me.	T	F
25	Dr. Saleh Salama have office hours from 8 until 4.	T	F
26	Mr. Mohamed Aly and I play tennis every Friday.	T	F
27	The jury has asked for more time.	T	F
28	Each of the candidates want an opportunity to discuss his problems.	T	F
29	A few of the windows were broken.	T	F

Go on to the Next Page

30	Many a woman feels entitled to more in life than just house-work.	T	F
31	Every man, woman, and child want to be happy.	T	F
32	Either the main office or the branch offices closes at 4 O'Clock.	T	F
33	Neither the father nor his son were ever seen again.	T	F
34	Here comes my parents.	T	F
35	The president, together with his advisers, is at Luxor.	T	F
36	Saleh Salama always leaves his office at 5 O'clock.	T	F
37	Two and two were four.	T	F
38	He has studied English since fourteen years.	T	F
39	They have not already finished their home assignment.	T	F
40	Mohamed said that he would meet Salem Saleh at 7:30.	T	F
41	Hady El-Banna had finished dressing before I woke up.	T	F
42	Drive can be very dangerous.	T	F
43	I expect that everyone will remain seated.	T	F
44	I have expected to have received my mail today.	T	F
45	Smoking is not allowed in public places.	T	F
46	They hoped to join us for lunch.	T	F
47	Do you Mr. Hady Ahmed Tawfeek?	T	F
48	Is Aly Salem want to watch "King Lear"?	T	F
49	If he would have worked harder, he would have a better job.	T	F

Go on to the Next Page

50	Sarah said that she will visit her parents in Ramadan.	T	F
51	We made box lunches so that we had food for the trip.	T	F
52	If this paint were dry, we could sit on the chair.	T	F
53	The Fiat 2000 is a new type of car.	T	F
54	A mango is a kind of a fruit.	T	F
55	The old farmer with the cane went to the barn to milk the cow.	T	F
56	Samy Salama said today he would wash his car.	T	F
57	Give me a cold glass of water.	T	F
58	To qualify for the job, you need a secondary school certificate.	T	F
59	Nader Mostafa is the most brightest little boy.	T	F
60	Mrs. Salama was injured in a horrible way while preparing he children's breakfast.	T	F
61	I'm real glad you called.	T	F
62	I bought it cheaply.	T	F
63	Ahmed and I haven't scarcely worked this week.	T	F
64	I love ice-cream more than Nady.	T	F
65	Aziza worked without complaining while her husband went to college.	T	F
66	After the movie we all agreed to go for some ice-cream.	T	F
67	Ask Sally when she gets in to call.	T	F
68	Alya left her bag in the bus.	T	F

Go on to the Next Page

69	The letter that was mailed this morning should arrive tomorrow. In this sentence, "that" is a connective pronoun.	T	F
70	Where are you going to?	T	F
71	Dalya started on another project.	T	F
72	We agreed to divide up the housework.	T	F
73	Dr. Kamal Saleh was puzzled by and concerned about Aly's day dreams.	T	F
74	Samy's day consisted of waking up early, working all day, and then to go back to bed.	T	F
75	Mr. Adel Emam not only is a good comedian, but also a good film director.	T	F
76	Either we should spend the night here or we should leave right now.	T	F

Complete the following sentences:

77. A main clause makes .....

78. A subordinate clause.....

79. Phrase does not .....

80. Salem speaks clearly. "clearly" is an .....

81. Mr Adel Kamal works very hard. "hard" is an .....

82. I met an old friend. "an" is a .....

83. I saw a man, the man was carrying a heavy bag. "the" is .....

84. Ahmed's father and mother are divorced. "and" is a .....

85. The five characteristics of every verb are ....., ..., ..., ..., and .....

86. The three kinds of moods are ....., ... and .....

Go on to the Next Page

87. The five types of nouns are ....., ..., ..., ..., ..., and .....

88. The six kinds of pronouns are .....,.....,....., ..., ..., and .....

89. The three characteristics shared by all nouns and pronouns are ....., ..., and .....

90. Gender indicates the sex of the person or thing named- whether ....., ..., or .....

91. The six tenses are ....., ..., ..., ..., ..., and .....

92. The future percent tense is used to .....

93. A verb is either in ..... or ..... voice.

94. The passive voice is appropriate to express an action when .....

95. The six kinds of adjectives are ....., ..., ..., ..., ..., and .....

96. The five kinds of adverbs are ....., ..., ..., ..., and .....

97. The following words can be either ..... or ..... depending on their use. <u>cheap, hard, fast, long, well.</u>

98. A connective may be a ....., a....., an ..... or a.....

99. The imperative mood expresses .....

100. A verbal is .....

♫ ♪ ♫ ♪ End of Test ♪ ♫ ♪ ♫

Appendix B

1. Writing Test Protocol
2. Criteria for Scoring
3. Writing Test Form

Writing Proficiency Test

Protocol of the Test

This protocol includes the following:

1. Plan for the test.
2. Criteria for scoring.
3. The writing test (general directions and test).

1. Plan for the test:

Testing purpose:	Proficiency, achievement and can be used for placement.
Type of test:	Proficiency in writing.
Population:	Any EFL/ESL background, high intermediate college level.
Prior Language History:	Intermediate to high advance level in EFL/ESL.
Constraints on Test Format:	60 minutes maximum time allowance.
Test Content Sampling:	Expert judgement.
Scope of Difficulty:	Broadly focused
Overall Length of Item	A writing task taking approximately an hour.
Administrative mode	Group
Equipment required	None
Item type	The writing task is not realistic in stimulus but is realistic in response.
Scoring procedures	Holistic scoring by two readers using the ESL composition profile developed by Newbury House Publishers (Newbury House Publishers, 1981). The five criteria applied to the writing task were: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

2. Criteria for Scoring:

Content	
30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Knowledgeable, substantive, thorough development of thesis, relevant to assigned topic.
26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Some knowledge of subject, adequate range, limited development of thesis, mostly relevant to topic, but lacks details.
21-17	FAIR TO POOR: Limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of topic.
16-13	VERY POOR: Does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive, not pertinent, or not enough to evaluate.
Organization	
20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Fluent expression, Ideas clearly stated/supported, succinct, well-organized, logical sequencing, cohesive.
17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing.
13-10	FAIR TO POOR: Non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development.
9-7	VERY POOR: Does not communicate, no organization, or not enough to evaluate.
Vocabulary	
20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage, word form mastery, appropriate register.
17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured.
13-10	FAIR TO POOR: Limited range, frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, meaning confused or obscured.
9-7	VERY POOR: Essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, or not enough to evaluate.

Language use	
25-22	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** Effective complex constructions, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, preposition.
21-18	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** Effective but simple construction, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured.
17-11	**FAIR TO POOR:** Major problems in simple/complex constructions, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused or obscured.
10-5	**VERY POOR:** Virtually no master of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, or not enough to evaluate.
Mechanics	
5	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** Demonstrates mastery of conventions, few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.
4	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** Occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured.
3	**FAIR TO POOR:** Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor handwriting, meaning confused or obscured.
2	**VERY POOR:** No mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible, or not enough to evaluate

A Composition Test for ESL Learners

General Directions:

The purpose of this test is to determine how well you can write correct English. The readers who score this test will consider your ability to write clearly and correctly. Content, organization of ideas, vocabulary, language use and mechanics (punctuation, capitalization and spelling) will be considered. You will have as much time as you need. There is, however, a suggested time shown on the test sheet.

- No questions may be asked after the examination has begun.
- Do not talk to any one during the examination.
- When you are told to turn this page, read the instructions which appear on the first page carefully and then proceed at once to write your composition.
- Do not turn this page until you are told to do so.

♦♦♦♦Good Luck♦♦♦♦

A Composition Test

(60 Minutes)

Instructions:

You are asked to write a composition on the topic below. Write as much as you can. Write your composition on the lines below. You can use scratch paper to make notes or an outline. You may also use the guiding question given below.

Activity:

Next week Adel Kamal and Sally are getting married. You are close friends with one or both of them. Write about them, their wedding and their plans. You may use any of the details below that you may add your own details.

1. The wedding: Time? Place? Who and how many will be in the bridal party? Dress? Reception? Number of guests?
2. Description of the bride: Physical appearance? Age? Much older or younger than the groom? Who is she? Married before? Career woman? Reason for wanting to get married: Love? Money?
3. Description of the groom: Physical appearance? Age? Much older or younger than the bride? Who is he? Married before? Factory worker? Prosperous doctor? Reason for wanting to get married: Love? Money?
4. Reaction of the bride's parents to the wedding: Happy? Upset with the idea of losing their daughter? Like the groom? Why? Dislike the groom? Why?
5. Plans: Honeymoon? Where? How long? Where will they live? In a luxurious apartment in Cairo? With the bride's parent? Planning to raise a family?

♦♦♦♦♦ End of the Test ♦♦♦♦♦